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A SIXTH-CENTURY CHINESE STELE

ON the sixth day of the sixth month of the second year of Yung Ting, Lu Tsou Tang offered a tablet to the Buddha and had his name and the date inscribed on it. This no doubt propitious date was

figures thickly gilded. Of both plentiful traces remain and the thick coats of paint and varnishes, though hiding some of the details of the carving, have left in parts a thick, rich patina.

On the face of the stone we see in the middle, on a raised platform and enthroned on a double lotus, the Lord Buddha in the



FACE OF STELE, WHITE MARBLE
CHINESE, 559 A. D.

559 A. D., the second year of Yung Ting, Emperor of the Ch'en Dynasty in the period generally known as the Six Dynasties. So much we learn from the inscription on a stele lent to the Museum by Mr. Grenville L. Winthrop.

It is made of white marble and was originally painted in different colors and the

attitude of preaching. An ornate halo surrounds his head and a simple almond-shaped one indicates the saintly emanations of his person. He is attended by four Bodhisattvas who stand to the right and left on lotus buds. The two inner ones are in the attitude of adoration, while the two outer Bodhisattvas are crowned and hold

their hands in the pose of instruction. Four flying angels form an arch overhead, the outer two with hands clasped in adoration, the inner pair carrying a stupa, a shrine, in which the earthly remains of the Buddha were treasured. In front of the raised platform two haloed figures, possibly the Kings of North and South, have between

of whom he does not mention. Two of the figures of donors overlap the corners and are represented on the sides of the stone, while out of the mouths of dragons over their heads come stems or bands which seem to carry the lotus buds on which the Bodhisattvas on the front of the stele are placed.



BACK OF STELE, WHITE MARBLE
CHINESE, 559 A. D.

them a lotus flower growing out of a pond, an offering to the central figure. Lu Tsou Tang also decorated the back of the almond-shaped stone, in itself a halo to the enthroned Buddha. Here we see Maitreya in the attitude called royal ease sitting under the trees and below in six arches the donor and his friends or relations, the names

This stone is a valuable supplement to our collection of sculpture: both on the face and back it is delightfully carved and very beautiful in design; as it is dated, it is also a valuable document for fixing the period of early sculpture, and for the comparison between Wei and Six Dynasties work.

S. C. B. R.